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April 2008



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Silvio O. Conte

*National Fish and  
Wildlife Refuge*

*Nulhegan  
Basin  
Division*

*Birds*

Black-backed woodpecker  
David Govatski

## Introduction

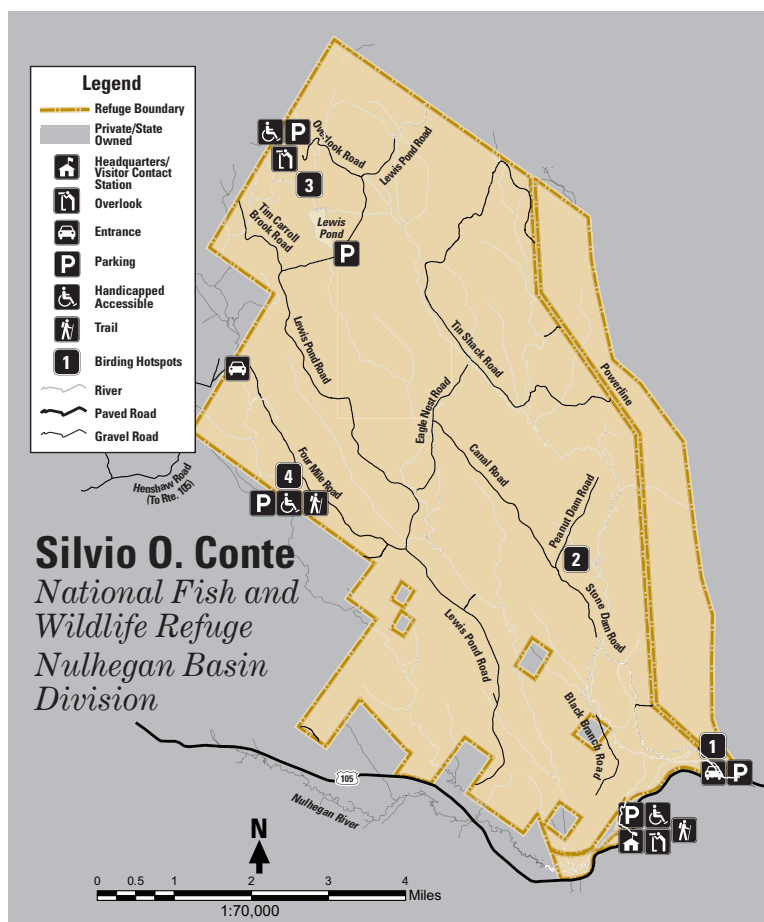
*The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established the Nulhegan Basin Division of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge in 1999 on more than 26,000 acres of wild lands in Essex County, Vermont. The Nulhegan River and three of its four major tributaries – the North, Yellow and Black branches – exert a strong influence over refuge habitats. Bogs, fens, shrub-dominated wetlands and swamps, as well as lowland conifer, montane and hardwood forests support a diversity of bird species. Several bird species that are uncommon in the Northeast occur here at the southern periphery of their breeding ranges. This group consists of year-round residents such as boreal chickadees, gray jays, spruce grouse, and black-backed woodpeckers, as well as migratory species, including bay-breasted warblers, palm warblers, olive-sided flycatchers, rusty blackbirds, and Philadelphia vireos. In addition, wetland and upland areas provide stopover habitat for transient birds and wintering habitat for finch, crossbill and grosbeak populations.*

*Visitors can take short walks on any of the 40 miles of gravel roads and numerous logging paths, and see a variety of warbler, finch, flycatcher, vireo, thrush and woodpecker species.*

## Four birding hotspots: (see map for locations)

1. Stone Dam Road entrance area: This is a riparian, wooded area along the Nulhegan River and Stone Dam Road. Watch for Canada, black-throated green, northern parula, Blackburnian and black-throated blue warblers along the power line corridor. Common merganser, great blue heron and belted kingfisher can be seen along the river.

2. Peanut Dam Road: This 1.3 mile spur road through a mix of spruce-fir and tamarack provides great habitat for boreal species such as black-backed woodpecker, boreal chickadee, gray jay and spruce grouse, as well as several species of warblers, and ruby and golden-crowned kinglets.
3. Lewis Pond and Lewis Pond Overlook: Watch for loons on the pond in spring and migrating waterfowl in the fall. At 2,100 feet elevation, the overlook offers views of Lewis Pond and the Nulhegan Basin below.
4. Mollie Beattie Bog: This is a good place to watch for boreal species while observing an assortment of warblers along Four Mile Road. Blackpoll, palm, Nashville and magnolia warblers can be seen here. Swamp, Lincoln's and white-throated sparrows breed close by.





### User notes:

The birds listed are likely to be seen on the refuge and in adjoining areas.

The numbers and species of birds that can be seen vary by season. The best time to view neo-tropic migrants and summer residents is in mid-April through mid-June, when deciduous trees have not fully leaved out. Nearly 100 bird species breed on the refuge during summer. September offers a host of south-bound migrants for viewing. Late winter months and early spring are excellent for viewing boreal species such as black-backed woodpecker, gray jay, boreal chickadee and spruce grouse.

The public is welcome to visit the Nulhegan Basin Division year-round, however the type of access (i.e., foot, automobile, snowmobile) varies by season. The division is closed to wheeled vehicular access during snowmobile and “mud” seasons. Snowmobile season starts in December and lasts until mud season, which is typically mid-April through late May. During this time the division is still accessible by foot. Please call 877/811 5222 for more information on current road conditions or contact the division headquarters for more details.

The following list contains 169 species that have been observed on or near the refuge. This list is in accordance with the 7th American Ornithologists’ Union checklist.

### Key to the Checklist Season

<b>St</b>	status	
<b>Sp</b>	spring	March 16 – May 31
<b>S</b>	summer	June 1 – July 31
<b>F</b>	fall	August 1 – November 15
<b>W</b>	winter	November 16 – March 15

### Status

<b>m</b>	migrant	not considered a breeder
<b>pr</b>	permanent resident	assumed to breed
<b>sr</b>	summer resident	not known to breed
<b>wr</b>	winter resident	not known to breed
<b>b</b>	breeder	breeds on or near the refuge
<b>i</b>	irruptive	numbers fluctuate erratically, usually based on food availability

### Relative Abundance

Abundance codes indicate likelihood of observing species in appropriate habitat.

<b>a</b>	abundant	a species which is very numerous
<b>c</b>	common	likely to be seen or heard in suitable habitat
<b>u</b>	uncommon	present, but not certain to be seen
<b>o</b>	occasional	seen only a few times during a season
<b>r</b>	rare	may be present but not every year
<b>v</b>	vagrant	has occurred in intervals greater than 10 years

	St	Sp	S	F	W
<b>Geese and Ducks</b>					
___ Snow Goose _____	m	r		o	
___ Canada Goose _____	b	c	u	c	
___ Wood Duck _____	b	c	c	c	
___ Mallard _____	b	c	c	c	r
___ American Black Duck _____	b	u	u	u	r
___ Green-winged Teal _____	m	u		o	
___ American Wigeon _____	m	r		r	
___ Northern Pintail _____	m	r		r	
___ Northern Shoveler _____	m	r			
___ Blue-winged Teal _____	m	r	r	r	
___ Ring-necked Duck _____	b	o	o	o	
___ Common Merganser _____	pr	u	u	c	r
___ Hooded Merganser _____	pr	u	u	u	r



Wood duck

### Gallinaceous Birds

___ Wild Turkey _____	pr	u	u	u	o
___ Ruffed Grouse _____	pr	c	u	c	u
___ Spruce Grouse _____	pr	u	u	u	o

### Loons

___ Common Loon _____	b	c	c	c	r
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### Grebes

___ Pied-billed Grebe _____	sr	o	o	o	
___ Horned Grebe _____	m	r		r	
___ Red-necked Grebe _____	m	r		r	

### Bitterns, Herons and Egrets

___ American Bittern _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Green Heron _____	sr	r	r	r	
___ Great Blue Heron _____	b	c	c	c	

New World Vultures	St	Sp	S	F	W
___ Turkey Vulture _____	sr	u	u	u	

### Osprey, Hawks and Eagles

___ Osprey _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Northern Harrier _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Golden Eagle _____	m			r	v
___ Bald Eagle _____	m	o	o	o	
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk _____	pr	u	u	u	o
___ Cooper's Hawk _____	pr	r	r	r	r
___ Northern Goshawk _____	pr	o	o	o	o
___ Broad-winged Hawk _____	b	u	c	u	
___ Red-shouldered Hawk _____	sr	r	r		
___ Red-tailed Hawk _____	b	u	o	u	r
___ Rough-legged Hawk _____	wr			r	r

### Falcons

___ American Kestrel _____	b	u	o	c	
___ Merlin _____	b	o	o	o	
___ Peregrine Falcon _____	b	o	o	o	



*Peregrine falcon*

### Rails

___ Virginia Rail _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Sora _____	b	o	o	o	
___ Common Moorhen _____	m	r		r	

### Plovers

___ Semipalmated Plover _____	m	r		r	
___ Killdeer _____	b	u	o	o	

### Sandpipers and Phalaropes

___ Greater Yellowlegs _____	m	r		o	
___ Lesser Yellowlegs _____	m			r	
___ Solitary Sandpiper _____	m	o	o	u	
___ Spotted Sandpiper _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Semipalmated Sandpiper _____	m	r	r	r	
___ Least Sandpiper _____	m	u	u	u	
___ Wilson's Snipe _____	b	c	c	c	
___ American Woodcock _____	b	c	u	u	

Pigeons and Doves	St	Sp	S	F	W
___ Mourning Dove _____	b	c	c	c	u

### Cuckoos

___ Black-billed Cuckoo _____	b	r	o	o	
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*Great horned owl*  
Robert Savannah

### Owls

___ Great Horned Owl _____	pr	u	u	u	u
___ Barred Owl _____	pr	u	u	u	u
___ Northern Saw-whet Owl _____	pr	u	o	o	o

### Nightjars

___ Common Nighthawk _____	m	r		o	
___ Whip-poor-will _____	sr	r			

### Swifts

___ Chimney Swift _____	b	u	u	o	
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### Hummingbirds

___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird _____	b	u	u	u	
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### Kingfishers

___ Belted Kingfisher _____	b	c	c	c	
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### Woodpeckers

___ Northern Flicker _____	b	c	c	c	
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker _____	b	c	c	u	
___ Downy Woodpecker _____	pr	c	c	c	u
___ Hairy Woodpecker _____	pr	c	c	c	u
___ Black-backed Woodpecker _____	pr	u	u	u	u
___ Pileated Woodpecker _____	pr	u	u	u	u

### Tyrant Flycatchers

___ Olive-sided Flycatcher _____	b	u	u	o	
___ Eastern Wood-Peewee _____	b	c	c	u	
___ Yellow-bellied Flycatcher _____	b	u	u	o	
___ Alder Flycatcher _____	b	c	c	u	
___ Least Flycatcher _____	b	c	u	u	
___ Eastern Phoebe _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Great Crested Flycatcher _____	b	u	u	o	
___ Eastern Kingbird _____	b	u	u	u	

### Shrikes

___ Northern Shrike _____	wr	r		o	o
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	St	Sp	S	F	W
<b>Vireos</b>					
___ Blue-headed Vireo _____	b	c	c	c	
___ Red-eyed Vireo _____	b	c	a	c	
___ Philadelphia Vireo _____	b	r	r	r	
___ Warbling Vireo _____	b	r	r		

### Crows and Jays

___ Blue Jay _____	pr	c	c	c	u
___ Gray Jay _____	pr	u	u	u	c
___ American Crow _____	pr	c	c	c	u
___ Common Raven _____	pr	u	u	u	u



### Larks

___ Horned Lark _____	m	o		o	r
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### Swallows

___ Tree Swallow _____	b	c	c	u	
___ Bank Swallow _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Cliff Swallow _____	sr	o	o	o	
___ Barn Swallow _____	b	u	u	u	

### Chickadees

___ Black-capped Chickadee _____	pr	a	a	a	a
___ Boreal Chickadee _____	pr	u	u	u	u

### Nuthatches

___ Red-breasted Nuthatch _____	pr	c	c	c	u
___ White-breasted Nuthatch _____	pr	u	u	u	u

### Creepers

___ Brown Creeper _____	pr	u	u	u	o
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### Wrens

___ House Wren _____	b	u		u	u
___ Winter Wren _____	b	c	c	c	

### Kinglets

___ Golden-crowned Kinglet _____	pr	a	a	a	c
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet _____	b	c	c	c	

### Thrushes

___ Eastern Bluebird _____	sr	o	o	o	
___ Wood Thrush _____	b	o	o	o	

	St	Sp	S	F	W
___ Veery _____	b	c	c	u	
___ Swainson's Thrush _____	b	u	c	u	
___ Hermit Thrush _____	b	c	c	c	
___ American Robin _____	b	c	c	c	r

### Mimic Thrushes

___ Gray Catbird _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Northern Mockingbird _____	sr		r		
___ Brown Thrasher _____	b	o	o		

### Starlings

___ European Starling _____	b	u	u	u	o
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### Pipits

___ American Pipit _____	m			o	
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### Waxwings

___ Bohemian Waxwing _____	i	r		r	o
___ Cedar Waxwing _____	b	o	c	c	

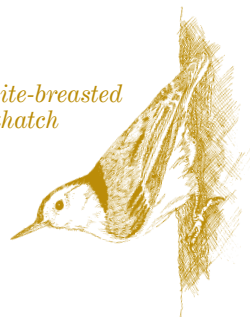
### Wood Warblers

___ Tennessee Warbler _____	m	o	o	u	
___ Nashville Warbler _____	b	c	c	c	
___ Northern Parula _____	b	c	c	c	
___ Chestnut-sided Warbler _____	b	c	c	c	
___ Cape May Warbler _____	m	r	r	o	
___ Magnolia Warbler _____	b	c	c	c	
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler _____	b	c	c	a	
___ Black-and-white Warbler _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Blackpoll Warbler _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Pine Warbler _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Palm Warbler _____	b	o	o	o	
___ Yellow Warbler _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Mourning Warbler _____	b	u	u	u	
___ Canada Warbler _____	b	u	c	u	
___ Wilson's Warbler _____	m	r	r	r	
___ Ovenbird _____	b	c	a	u	
___ Northern Waterthrush _____	b	c	c	u	
___ Common Yellowthroat _____	b	c	c	c	
___ American Redstart _____	b	c	c	u	

### Tanagers

___ Scarlet Tanager _____	b	u	u	o	
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*White-breasted nuthatch*



	St	Sp	S	F	W
Sparrows					
American Tree Sparrow	wr	u		u	u
Field Sparrow	b	r	r		
Chipping Sparrow	b	c	c	c	
Fox Sparrow	m	r		o	
Savannah Sparrow	b	u	u	u	
Lincoln's Sparrow	b	u	u	o	
Song Sparrow	b	c	c	c	r
Swamp Sparrow	b	c	c	u	
White-throated Sparrow	b	c	c	c	r
White-crowned Sparrow	m	r		u	
Dark-eyed Junco	b	c	u	c	u
Lapland Longspur	m			r	
Snow Bunting	wr			u	o
Sparrows					
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	b	u	u	u	
Northern Cardinal	pr	r	r	r	r
Indigo Bunting	b	u	u	o	



Bobolink	b	o	o	o
Eastern Meadowlark	b	r	r	r
Red-winged Blackbird	b	c	c	o
Common Grackle	b	c	c	u
Rusty Blackbird	b	u	u	u
Brown-headed Cowbird	b	u	o	u
Baltimore Oriole	b	u	o	

Purple Finch	b	u	u	u	r
Red Crossbill	i	r	r	r	r
White-winged Crossbill	i	r	r	r	r
Pine Grosbeak	i	o		o	o
Pine Siskin	b	u	u	u	u
American Goldfinch	b	u	u	u	u
Common Redpoll	i	r		r	r
Hoary Redpoll	i				r
Evening Grosbeak	b	u	u	u	o

House Sparrow	b	0	0	0	0
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Location \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Observers \_\_\_\_\_

Weather \_\_\_\_\_

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Special thanks to Northeast Kingdom Audubon members Carolyn Boardman and Thomas Berriman for all their hard work in compiling this comprehensive list.

